

CHIEF SCROUNGER OF THE "SWOOSIE"

'Red' Varner and Crew Of Famed Plane Recalled

By HARMON NICHOLS

Washington (AP)—The Mr. Fixit and chief scrounger of the crew of the famed "Swoosie" was Capt. Howard (Red) Varner.

Red could beg, borrow or steal anything from a knob on the instrument panel to a wing flat to keep the fabulous B-17 in the air.

The "Swoosie" was so dubbed by the crew after she was scarred at Pearl Harbor, because she was "half swan and half goose."

Anyhow, the goose or swan hung high for many a long month and became the only airship to fly and fight the enemy continuously from P-H day to V-J day. Some day she will come to a quiet rest at a national air museum to be built here. That'll be part of the Smithsonian institution.

But to get back to Red Varner and his antics.

I got the story from Col. Frank Kurtz of Los Angeles, Original pilot of the "Swoosie" who now is stationed at the Pentagon here.

He told me about his crew. Lt. Marvin L. MacAdams of Baltimore, now dead; Maj. Harry Schieber of Galveston, the navigator; Capt. Rowland (Danny) Boone of Hemet, Calif., the crew chief; Maj. Charles T. Reeves of Bakersfield, Calif., the bombardier. Plus our man Captain Red of San Rafael, Calif.

They made up a great gang and doubled in brass and aluminum. Maintenance men on the ground and crack bombing crew in the air. The "Swoosie" did well over 2,000 hours over the Pacific.



Harmon W. Nichols

This guy Red, though. If the boys needed a couple of yards of bailing wire to "lock" a door or keep the bomb bay tight, he could find it. One crew member threw up a challenge once.

"I'll bet you a buck, Red," he said, "you can't find us any American coffee here in the Pacific."

Red disappeared. Soon he was back and collecting his buck. On the next mission there was a can of Maxwell House in the cabin when the ship "hit the blue." No questions asked.

Another time the "Swoosie," held together as usual by makeshift, had just set a new record on a flight from Australia to New Zealand. Came the dark of night and the boys thought they deserved a party—which they really did.

Col. Kurtz explained that the officers' clubs abroad closed with the setting sun.

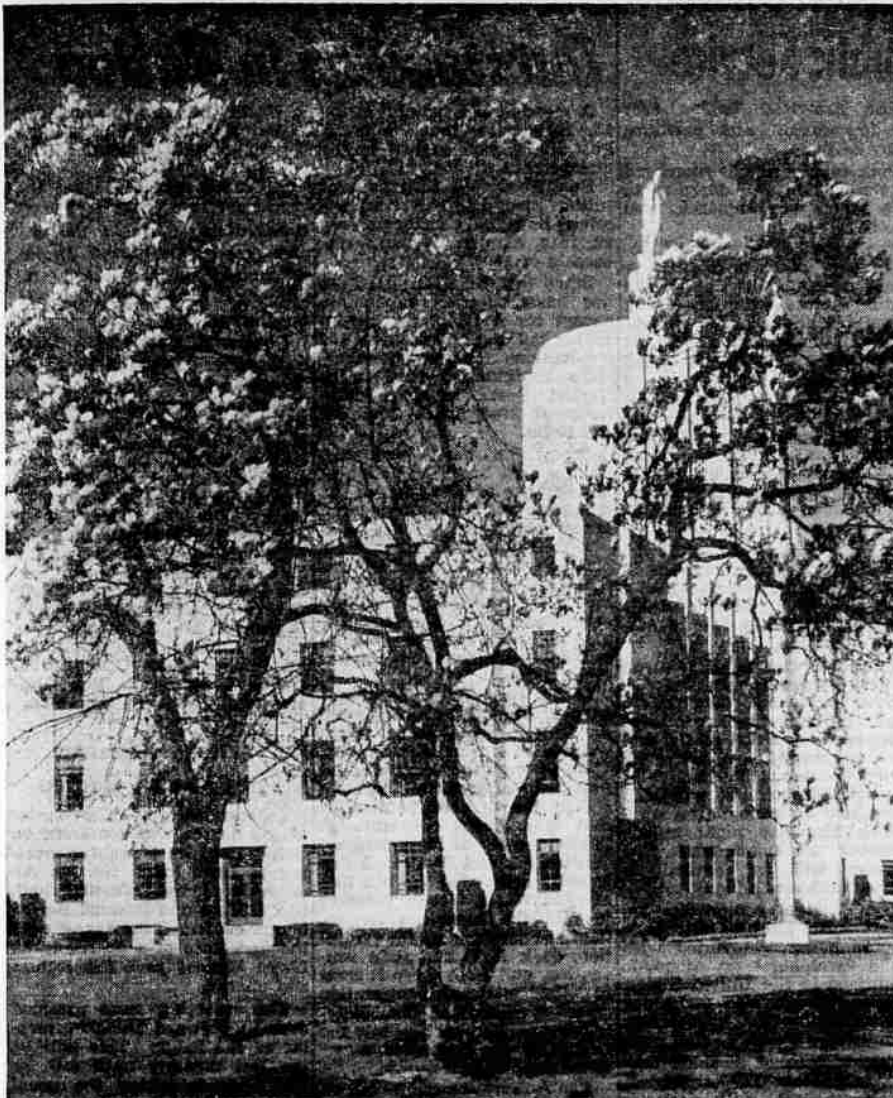
What was a party without anything to eat or drink?

Our man Red was off like a flash, even though it was 10 o'clock at night, the town was out of bounds and dark to boot.

Inside of an hour, the hungry and thirsty crew looked down the company street to see a weary figure struggling under a gunny sack slung over his shoulder.

Red, of course. The sack was full of everything from caviar to potato chips. From American beer to champagne.

The boys learned later that Red not only had dragged his honor out of the sack but also half the town.



Site of Business Sessions—Most of the general business assemblies of the 31st annual Oregon state American Legion convention will be held in the beautiful capitol building, pictured here.



Stephen Chadwick of Seattle, past national commander, who is one of the distinguished guests at the 31st annual Oregon state Legion convention in Salem this week.

Take Service Work

Independence — Elmer Hatfield and Cecil House have taken over the service department of Fulmer's garage. House was formerly employed by Hart Motor company and Hatfield has been operating a shop in Monmouth and has been employed at Fulmer's. Both men are approved mechanics.

Stevens & Son



Stevens & Son



Livesly Building

Telephone 3-8118

You Are Cordially Invited to Make This Your Downtown Meeting Place

CONVENIENTLY LOCATED IN SALEM'S TALLEST BUILDING

Enjoy seeing the beautiful Lenox China and a hundred lovely patterns of silverware, including these famous names:

Gorham - Wallace - Smith - Towle - Alvin - Whiting International - Lunt - Heirloom - Reed & Barton

State and Liberty